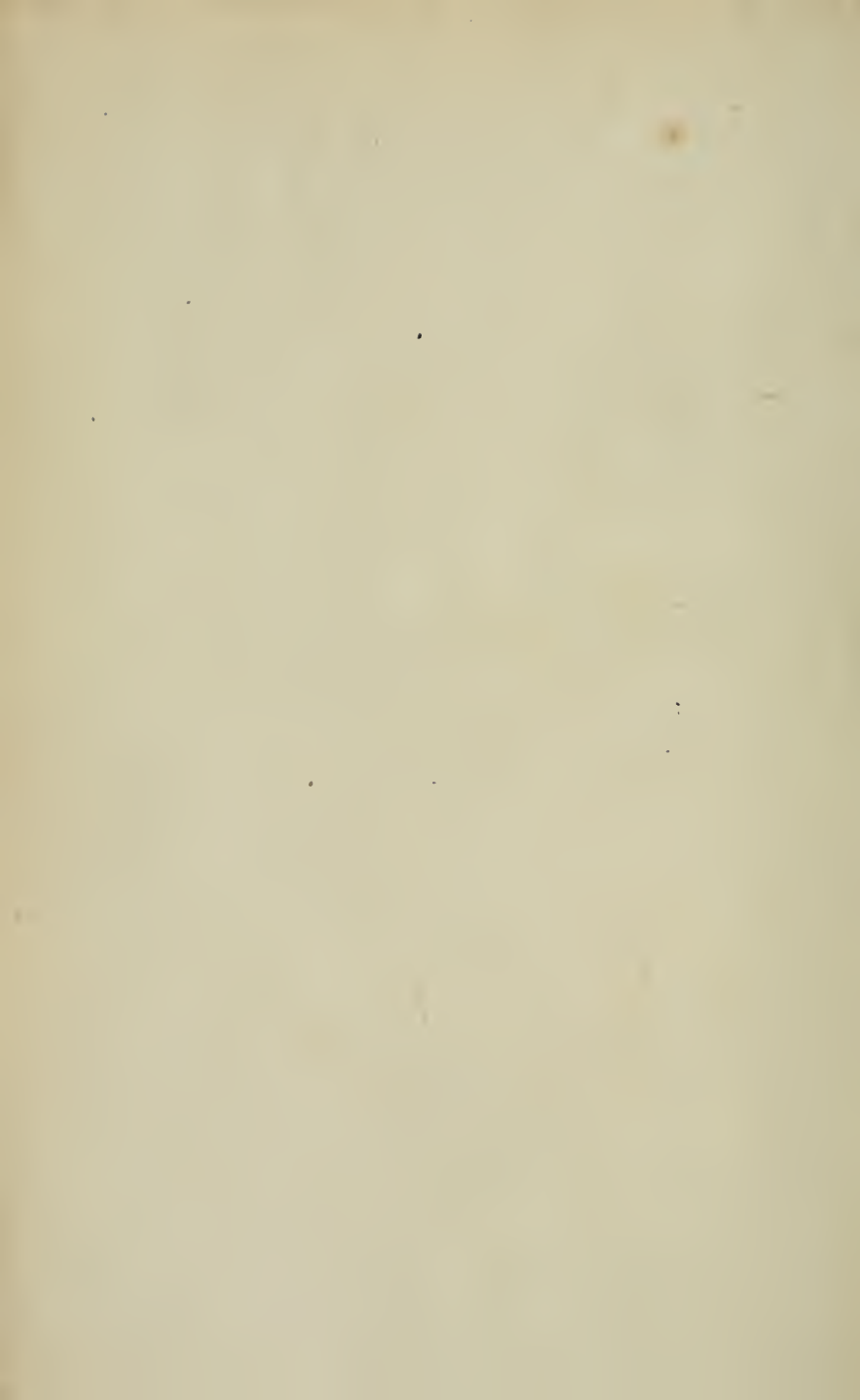


LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS



Charges

- By The Lord Bishop of Lincoln. 1840.
" The Lord Bishop of Winchester. 1841.
" The Lord Bishop of Exeter. 1841.
" The Lord Bishop of Salisbury. 1842.
" The Lord Bishop of Oxford. 1842.
" The Lord Bishop of St. Davids. 1842.
" The Lord Bishop of Bangor. 1843.
" The Lord Bishop of Rochester. 1843.
" The Lord Bishop of Lincoln. 1843.
" The Bishop of Exeter & Devon. 1857.
" The Lord Bishop of St. Davids. 1857.
-

A

CHARGE

TO THE

CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE

OF

LINCOLN,

BY

JOHN, LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN,

DELIVERED AT

THE TRIENNIAL VISITATION

IN MDCCCXL.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE CLERGY.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. G. F. & J. RIVINGTON,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD,
AND WATERLOO PLACE, PALL MALL.

1840.

A
C H A R G E,
§c.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

NINE years have elapsed since, in addressing you on a similar occasion, I remarked that we lived in times of no ordinary character. The remark is certainly not less applicable at the present moment. All that is passing around us leads rather to the conclusion, that we are on the eve of a great conflict—a conflict of principles. The question is not now, as it has been in past times, whether this or that branch of our civil or ecclesiastical polity is to be reformed or remodelled; but whether the whole frame of society is to be changed, and a new system introduced, founded on different views of the best mode of promoting the general happiness, and designed to effect an entire revolution in the relations in which men have hitherto stood, both to each

other, and to the community. There is a ferment in the public mind, threatening danger to all existing institutions; and among the rest to that, in the welfare of which we are most deeply interested,—the Established Church. For in addition to those who are opposed to it on religious grounds—because they object to its doctrines or its discipline, or think its union with the State prejudicial to its spiritual character—it has to encounter other, and even more formidable opponents. There are some who wish to bring about what are called organic changes in the civil constitution. They naturally labour for the subversion of the Established Church; not because they are hostile to it in particular, but because it is an institution, closely connected with the other institutions of the land, and therefore an obstacle in their way. There are others, of whom I have already observed that they aim at effecting a change, not in the political constitution of the country, but in the frame of society itself. Their doctrines strike at the root of all religious and moral obligation. Man, according to them, is not a moral agent, having within him a principle of immortality, but a mere compound of perishable matter. Consistently with this doctrine, they teach that he ought to seek his true happiness in procuring for himself the greatest possible amount of animal enjoyment; and that the existence of an intelligent Creator and righteous Governor of the universe, to whom he is accountable for his actions,

is a fiction originating in fraud, and propagated by superstition. To the advocates of these opinions, Christianity must, on account of its very purity and spirituality, be hateful; and as the purpose of a visible Church is to perpetuate Christianity, to preserve the knowledge, and to promote the practical influence of its truths to the end of time, they regard the destruction of the Established Church as a necessary preliminary to the triumph of their system.—Such is the formidable host of adversaries arrayed against us. Confident as we are in the goodness of our cause, and stedfast in our reliance on the divine protection, it is impossible to contemplate the prospect before us without some feeling of anxiety and apprehension; not with respect to the final issue of the contest, (of that we are assured by Him whose word can never fail,) but to the fiery trial which the church may in the mean time be called to undergo.

A conflict of principles, as it admits no compromise, is the bitterest and most fearful of conflicts; but it possesses at the same time a grandeur and dignity which raise it far above the ordinary struggles of political warfare. It calls forth all the faculties of man, and imparts to them tenfold energy either for good or evil. By the intense interest which it excites, it gradually absorbs every member of the community within its vortex. It allows no neutrality. The most indolent and apathetic, they who shrink almost instinctively from every

thing that bears even the semblance of contention, are constrained to choose their part ; and that part once chosen, even the coldest natures are kindled into a flame. At this moment, when the conflict can scarcely be said to have begun, effects such as I am describing are partially manifesting themselves. Both the assailants and defenders of the Established Church are assuming a more determined attitude. Many who, though they lived in outward communion with it, displayed little zeal in its cause, and seemed at first disposed to stand aloof from the struggle, now roused by the threatening aspect of the times, have thrown aside their former indifference, and are making the most strenuous exertions in its support. May we not indulge the hope, that, as the public mind comes to be more thoroughly enlightened as to the nature of its claims, and the grounds on which they rest, their justice will be more generally recognised, and the number of its devoted and stedfast friends continually increased?

One of the necessary consequences of the present position of the Established Church is to cause its affairs to occupy a considerable share of the deliberations of the Legislature ; to mix them up with party questions, and thus to involve the Clergy, how much soever against their inclination, in the strife of worldly politics. I am far from thinking that the ministers of religion, because they have dedicated themselves to holy things, are therefore precluded from taking a part in the great

questions of civil policy which divide public opinion, as if they were isolated in this respect from the rest of the community, and felt not the same zeal for the honour, the same interest in the temporal prosperity of their country. But the proper business of a pastor is with his flock: the minister's proper sphere of action is his parish. It is there that his thoughts, his affections ought to be centered; and if he either consults the dignity, or is alive to the responsibilities of his sacred office, or is anxious to preserve that spirituality of mind which alone can cause him to take delight in the performance of its duties, he will not be forward to mingle in political strife. Not only when so engaged is he in danger of losing the respect of the laity, who will look upon him as out of his place, as assuming a character which does not belong to him; but he is liable to be infected by the atmosphere which he breathes, and to contract something of a sharp and angry and contentious temper. If then the circumstances of the times will scarcely allow us to avoid taking a part in the questions which agitate the political world, it is the more incumbent upon us, my Reverend Brethren, to keep a strict watch over ourselves, that the part which we take may never be inconsistent with the character of Ministers of the Gospel of Peace.

Although, however, the present state of the Established Church is confessedly one of difficulty and trial, incidentally at least it is productive of

good. It compels us to look back to the origin of our Ecclesiastical Institutions; to examine and to weigh the designs with which they were framed, and the ends which they were intended to accomplish. Our eyes are thus opened to the extent to which we have deviated from the original design, and to the fallacies by which we have hitherto justified to ourselves that deviation. We recognize the faultiness of many practices in which we never suspected that there was any thing wrong, because sanctioned by the example of those who preceded us. Take for instance the existence of pluralities. The clamour against them has caused men to inquire into the original foundation of Parochial Benefices in this country; to ascertain that they were founded by the lords of the soil, with the view of securing for themselves and their dependants the continual presence of a minister of religion, from whose lips they might learn knowledge; at whose hands they might receive the Sacraments of the Church; to whom they might resort for advice and consolation in the hour of perplexity and distress. The spiritual instruction of the people was, so to speak, the final cause for which the Parochial Endowments were conferred; and the residence of the minister was consequently the condition on which he was entitled to receive them. If, therefore, no interference had ever taken place with those endowments; if the system of impropriations had never been introduced, it is

evident that a plurality of Parochial benefices would have been wholly indefensible. The more thoroughly the subject was sifted, the more general the conviction became, that some legislative enactment was necessary. Out of that conviction the late Act arose; and it may perhaps be asked, why the Legislature did not altogether abolish pluralities, or at least restrict them to cases of absolute necessity; cases in which the income of the living is of itself insufficient to the maintenance of an incumbent. The answer is, that, instead of passing at once from the previous lax system to a total abolition of pluralities, it was deemed a safer course to try what would be the effect of limiting them to the distance of ten miles. That distance was chosen because the pluralist would be able to visit, from time to time, without inconvenience, the benefice on which he did not reside: and thus partially to fulfil the personal obligation which he contracted at the time of his institution. Among the evils arising out of that system of connivance under which livings were held voidable, it was not the least that the livings so held were frequently at a great distance from each other, sometimes at opposite extremities of the kingdom; and that the pluralist, on account of the distance, conceived himself released from the obligation of visiting that on which he did not reside. Content with paying his Curate the stipend fixed by law, and contributing more or less liberally towards the temporal

wants of the parishioners, he seemed to dismiss their spiritual interests from his thoughts, and to regard the living, not as a trust involving the most serious responsibility, but as a source of income. The limitation of the distance within which two benefices can be held to ten miles, will effectually correct this evil.

Having mentioned the Plurality Act, I shall proceed briefly to call your attention to some of its provisions, either on account of the principles which they involve, or their bearing upon your personal interests and comforts. The principal objects of the Act are, the regulation of Pluralities, and the promotion of the residence of the Clergy. It will be found, on an examination of the abstracts of the returns annually made to the Privy Council, that among the chief obstacles to residence is the want of a house, or at least of a suitable house. With a view to the removal of this obstacle, an Act was passed in the same Session with the Plurality Act, amending what is usually termed Gilbert's Act, and giving increased facilities for the erection of parsonage houses. But the Plurality Act goes further, and requires the Bishop himself to take measures for the erection of a house on all livings, which shall have become vacant since the date of its enactment, and of which the yearly income exceeds 100*l*. I trust that I shall seldom be called upon to take those measures; I trust that the Clergy, knowing the state of the law, will, by

voluntarily undertaking to build, render my interference unnecessary. For I shall feel it my duty to enforce that provision of the Act, the 62nd clause, in all cases in which the circumstances of the benefice place no insuperable impediment in the way. As the new incumbent enters upon the living with a full knowledge of the existence of the provision, he cannot be allowed to urge his personal convenience, as a reason why he should be exempted from its operation.

Under the Act 57 Geo. III. residence was defined, residence in the parsonage house. The consequence was, that many incumbents, who were not only performing their own duty, but even residing in the parish, though not in the parsonage house on account of its unfitness or insufficiency, were returned as non-resident; and thus a most unfair impression was made on the public mind, with respect to the extent to which non-residence prevailed. In order to correct this impression, the late Act empowers the Bishop, where there is either no house or no fit house, to constitute a house situate within the distance of three miles in the case of a country benefice, and of two miles in the case of a town benefice, a legal house of residence, so that incumbents thus circumstanced, will in future be deemed resident incumbents. Let me, however, observe that this provision must not be construed into a plea for frustrating the evident

intention of the legislature, that fit houses shall be built in all cases in which the means of building them exist.

Another important provision of the Plurality Act is that which empowers the Bishop to enforce the performance of two services on every Lord's Day, each of such services to include a Sermon or a Lecture. There are, I am aware, many cases in which this provision cannot at present be enforced, because, the incumbent or curate has the care of two churches; a state of things which the restriction of pluralities will gradually amend. But I shall deem it my duty to carry into effect the declared intention of the legislature in every possible case. Not that I am very sanguine in anticipating good from religious services performed, not spontaneously, but merely in obedience to the commands of an ecclesiastical superior. Compulsory enactments are at best a poor substitute for a sense of duty. But I am satisfied that no single cause has contributed more to the prevalence of dissent in this diocese, than the too frequent practice of omitting a second service. When the parishioners see that a resident clergyman, having the care of a single church, opens that church once only on the Lord's Day, the impression naturally made on their minds is, that he is more desirous of consulting his own ease than of promoting their spiritual welfare; and if they are seriously

disposed, they turn to any teacher who professes to supply them with the spiritual food for which they hunger.

With respect to the delivery of a sermon or lecture at each service, our experience tells us that, when the prayers of the Church only are read, and no sermon delivered, the parishioners are very remiss in their attendance. I will not stop to inquire whether this ought to be so; whether the paramount importance attached to preaching in the present day bespeaks a healthy state of religious feeling; whether it does not savour of that love of excitement, and that undue admiration of mere intellect which are the characteristics of the age; whether indeed the sermon is not too often regarded in the light of an intellectual treat, and estimated rather by the gratification which it affords to the taste, than by its tendency to amend the heart. Whatever might be the result of such an inquiry, it is, as I have just observed, certain that when the prayers of the Church only are read and no sermon delivered, the parishioners are very remiss in their attendance; and surely no conscientious pastor will think that he has discharged his duty to them, until he has removed, as far as lies in his power, every plea for this remissness. If they are only to be won to the house of God by a sermon, he will not fail to preach it. The omission of a second sermon will too probably be ascribed to one of two causes; to our want of ability, or to our

disinclination to labour for the edification of our flocks ; and I need scarcely observe that, to whichever of the two it is ascribed, the effect must be most prejudicial to our ministerial usefulness. I am, therefore, assured that my Reverend Brethren will not require any exhortation from me to induce them to comply with this provision of the Act.

Let me, before I quit the subject of preaching, guard against a possible misinterpretation of my meaning ; let no one infer, from what I have said, that I am disposed to undervalue its importance. It has been in all ages of the Church, and ever will be, the blessed instrument both of turning the sinner from the evil of his way, and of promoting the growth of the confirmed Christian in holiness. I mean only to offer a caution against an error into which many, I fear, in the present day, are liable to fall—the error of supposing that religion consists chiefly in the hearing of sermons.

I have now noticed those provisions of the Plurality Act to which it appeared to me most important to call your attention. It contains also clauses to facilitate the uniting and disuniting of Benefices. Unions of Benefices are justly regarded with some degree of suspicion, because they have in past times too often been made, not with a view to the spiritual interests of the parishioners, but to the temporal interests of the patrons and incumbents. It is, however, certain, that in the northern part of this diocese, where the parishes are thinly

peopled, and the incomes of the livings frequently small, there are many contiguous benefices which may be advantageously united. When the livings are not in the same patronage, an arrangement must be made for the regulation of the succession in which the patrons are to present; but this arrangement need not, as it appears to me, create any great difficulty.

With respect to the stipends of the curates of non-resident incumbents, one alteration only has been made. According to the old act, when the population is between 500 and 1000, the stipend is to be 120*l.*; by the new, it is raised to 135*l.* in all cases in which the population exceeds 750. But the Bishop is deprived of the discretionary power, which he before possessed, of assigning, under certain circumstances, a smaller stipend than that specified in the act. That can only now be done with the sanction of the Archbishop of the province. In all cases, whether the incumbent is resident or non-resident, he, as well as the curate, is required to sign a declaration, to the effect that the one will *boná fide* pay, the other *boná fide* receive, the full stipend assigned in the licence, without deduction.

I turn to other matter. As the effect of the discussions on pluralities and residence has been to cause men to look back to the origin of Parochial Benefices, and to the objects for which they were instituted, so the discussions on the Clergy Discipline Bill have forcibly drawn their attention to the

relations in which the Church stands to the State, and the principles on which the union between them should be founded. Before the reformation no such union can be said to have existed in this country. The people, considered as members of the State, were subject to the King; considered as members of the Church, to the Bishop of Rome: they were, in their religious and temporal capacities respectively, subjects of two independant powers, between which a perpetual struggle was going on. The ecclesiastical history of England, from the conquest to the reformation, is little else than a history of papal attempts at encroachment, and of resistance to them on the part of the legislature. To this struggle Henry VIII. put an end, by altogether abolishing the jurisdiction of the pope in this realm, and subjecting all estates and degrees, whether ecclesiastical or civil, to his rule. Thus the Church and State were brought into union under one temporal head, and the fundamental article of that union is the supremacy of the crown.

When, however, we speak of the supremacy of the crown, we mean a limited supremacy—limited with reference to the authority with which Christ, the Head of the Church, has invested it. “Some kinds of actions, conversant about such affairs,” says Hooker, “are denied unto kings; as, namely, actions of power and order, and of spiritual jurisdiction, which hath with it inseparably joined power to administer the word and sacraments, power to ordain,

to judge as ordinary, to bind and loose, to excommunicate, and such like ¹.”

It is further to be observed, that the expression “supremacy of the crown,” does not convey exactly the same meaning now, that it did at the Reformation. The supremacy has since been limited, both in civil and ecclesiastical matters. Many acts, which the crown then claimed the power of doing, by virtue of the royal prerogative, can now only be done with the consent of parliament; for instance, the erection of ecclesiastical courts, without the consent of parliament, was by the act 1 W. c. 2, declared to be illegal.

There is inherent in every society, as essential to its preservation, a power of correcting offending members, and even cutting them off from the body, if the malignity of the offence requires the application of so severe a remedy. This power, therefore, exists in the visible Church—the society which Christ intended the professors of His faith to compose on earth. If the Apostles, to whom was committed the office of forming it, had left no directions respecting this power, the Church must itself have prescribed the mode of its exercise. But as they were invested by Christ with authority to bind and loose, so we learn from Scripture that they conferred ² similar authority on those whom they

¹ Ecclesiastical Polity, l. viii. p. 447. ed. fol. 1705.

² In the passages quoted by Archbishop Potter, in his Trea-

appointed to preside over the Churches which they founded; and in the third century, we find¹ Cyprian ascribing to bishops, in virtue of the episcopal office, the power of deposing offending ministers, or suspending them from the exercise of their sacred functions; though he himself appears not to have exercised this power without the advice of the clergy and the consent of the laity; thereby showing that he acted in behalf of the Church, and as its minister or organ².

The Divine Founder of the Church conferred on it no external, co-active power. Its censures are addressed to the consciences of men, and designed to lead them to repentance, by inspiring them with a dread of exclusion from the invisible Church in heaven; the only appointed path to which lies through the visible Church on earth. Excommunication, however, even in the primitive Church affected the temporal interests of the lay offender indirectly, by causing the other members to avoid all intercourse, and to decline all dealings with him;

tise on Church Government, c. v. p. 252. Crossthwaite's edition.

¹ Quum pro Episcopatûs vigore et Cathedræ auctoritate haberes potestatem, qua possis de illo statim vindicari.—Ep. iii. ad Rogatianum. Ed. Fell.—And again in the same epistle: Fungaris circa eum potestate honoris tui, ut eum vel deponas vel abstineas.

² Quando a primordio Episcopatûs mei statuerim nihil, sine consilio vestro, et sine consensu plebis, meâ privatâ sententiâ, gerere.—Ep. xiv. ad Presbyteros et Diaconos.

and those of the clerical offender directly, by the abstraction of that portion of the ecclesiastical funds which would have fallen to his share in the monthly distribution ¹. When, therefore, it is said, that the power of the Church is internal, applying only to things spiritual, that of the State external, applying only to things temporal, it is evident that this distinction cannot always be strictly preserved; that cases of a mixed character will arise, in which the spiritualities and the temporalities are so blended together, that they cannot be separately dealt with. The spiritual power might degrade an immoral or heretical minister from his office; but if he obstinately persisted in refusing to yield up the Church in which he had officiated to his successor, unless the temporal power lent its aid, the sentence of the spiritual would remain in great measure inoperative ². The design of the union of the Church and State is, to bring these two powers into harmonious combination; so that the same sentence which affects the spiritual office, may also affect the temporalities annexed to it. But such a combination necessarily implies, that both parties ³ mutually recede from the full assertion of the rights which they inherently possess. Otherwise, either the Church would become the creature and slave of the State; or the State

¹ Interim se a divisione mensurnâ tantum contineant. Cypriani Ep. xxxiv. ad Presbyteros et Diaconos. — Divisiones mensurnas. Ep. ad eosdem, xxxix.

² Bingham's Christian Antiquities, l. xvi. c. 2. § 3.

the mere executor of the decrees of the Church. The supremacy rests with the State, because that alone possesses external, co-active power ; but the Church does not surrender any of the powers conferred on it by its Divine Founder ; though it allows some of them to remain in abeyance, and permits the State to prescribe the mode in which others are to be exercised. That purely spiritual power of correction given by the Word of God to the Bishop, as the minister of the Church¹, which appears in the earliest times to have been exercised according to fixed rules, though without the formality of juridical proceedings—that power he can only exercise in this country, as it is committed to him by the ordinance of the realm. The State, in recognizing the spiritual authority inherent in the office, prescribes the mode of its exercise as the condition of annexing to it the right of external jurisdiction ; of investing it with external, co-active power. The courts in which it is exercised are still called the Bishops' Courts, as they were before the Reformation ; but they are in the eye of the law the courts of the crown. For I can attach no other meaning to the expression—that the queen is in all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil, in these her dominions supreme—than this, that all rights of external jurisdiction are derived from the crown. This is the interpretation put upon it by the most eminent lawyers who have written

¹ Palmer's History of the Church, P. iv. c. xvi. § 1.

on the subject: by Sir Michael Forster¹, in the passage quoted by the learned Archdeacon of Lincoln in his published Charge of last year; and by Sir Matthew Hale², who says that “all power of external jurisdiction is originally in the crown; and that the power of the keys, *in foro conscientiæ*, is not properly a jurisdiction, because it is without any external coercion.”

The Clergy Discipline Bill of last year having been withdrawn, I think it neither necessary nor desirable to enter into the controversy to which it gave rise³. I have been induced to touch upon the subject of the relation of the Church to the State, because opinions have recently been put forth, respecting the independance of the Church, which appear to me to be wholly incompatible

¹ “If the principle of a right of jurisdiction, underived from the civil magistrate, does not always lead to the popery of the Church of Rome, it leads to a state of things equally mischievous and more absurd; I mean, a popery at our doors. Our ancestors, at and about the time of the Reformation, had plainly this notion of the matter; and therefore they did not content themselves with barely abolishing the usurped power of the Bishop of Rome, but went to the root of the evil, and declared that all jurisdiction, as well Ecclesiastical as civil, is vested in, and exercised by delegation from, the Crown.” Examination of Bishop Gibson’s Codex, p. 23.

² Quoted by Bishop Warburton in his Alliance, book ii. c. iii. § 2. on the Supremacy.

³ The point at issue in that controversy was not a question between the Church and State, but between the Metropolitan and Diocesan Courts.

with the maintenance of the union between them. As I have already observed, in every union there must be mutual concession. Both parties must be content to recede in some degree from the full assertion of their pretensions ; not to surrender their inherent rights, but to allow some of those rights to remain in abeyance. Without such concession their respective powers will be continually clashing. At this moment, in the northern part of the island, we find one minister, appointed by the highest authority in the Church, exercising the spiritual functions in a parish ; while another, appointed by the lay patron, under the sanction of the civil courts, receives the profits of the benefice. The Church says to the State, I have no power over the temporalities, you have none over the spiritualities ; and the parties are thus placed in apparently irreconcilable opposition to each other. The design of the union of the Church and State is to prevent the occurrence of such collisions ; to provide against this disjunction of the civil and spiritual condition of the clergy.

It has been said, and truly said, that in this country the union of the Church and State was not founded on any precise definition of their respective rights¹ ; the limits of their respective spheres of action were not exactly marked out. It may be, therefore, that the State, in the exercise of its

¹ Gladstone on the State in its relations with the Church. c. iv. § 15.

political omnipotence, has occasionally evinced a disposition to encroach upon the province of the Church; and I mean not to say that every indication of such a disposition ought not to be carefully watched. But let us not, my Reverend Brethren, indulge in unreasonable jealousies; let us not, whenever a measure is proposed affecting the Church, suspect a lurking design to violate some essential part of its constitution; especially let us guard against the spirit of exaggeration. The union between the Church and State can only be maintained by a mutual friendly understanding. Before it existed, the Church stood in the position of an independant, and frequently antagonist power: should it now be dissolved, the Church will stand in a very different position; it will, as to its temporal condition, be placed on a level with the numerous sects into which the subjects of the realm are divided.

Another question to which public attention has of late been especially directed, and in which we, as ministers of the Church, are deeply interested, is National Education. The Author of our nature evidently designed that, during the earliest years of the child's existence, the responsibility of supplying his wants, bodily, mental, and even spiritual as far as they can be supplied by human aid, should devolve on the parent. Nothing but absolute necessity can warrant an interference with this providential arrangement—a disturbance

of the relation between the parent and child ; and we may justly infer, that there is something essentially vicious in a state of society, in which the necessity for such interference is continually occurring. One of the duties thus devolving on the Christian parent, in consequence of his relation to his offspring, is to bring them to the baptismal font, to the end that they may be admitted to a participation in the benefits of the Christian covenant. From that moment the Church becomes, as it were, a sharer in the parental responsibility, and is bound to co-operate, through her ministers, in causing the child to be trained to lead his future life according to this holy beginning. Her part, however, is to act in subordination to that which I have already described as the Divine appointment : not to supersede, but to assist the parental authority ; to supply the deficiencies of the parent ; to carry out the parental training. She, therefore, enjoins her ministers to be diligent and careful in the catechizing of children, in instructing them in the principles of the Christian faith, in the knowledge of their duty both towards God and man ; and this godly training she means to be continued until they are qualified to give an intelligent assent to the promises made for them in baptism.

From this brief description of the relation in which the Church, as entrusted with the instruction of the rising generation, stands to the children of Christian parents ; it is evident that she can

never lend her sanction to a system of purely secular education. She looks at them as beings destined to an eternal existence, and her office is to prepare them for it. She cultivates the mental faculties, because through them alone can any knowledge, whether secular or religious, be communicated; but her proper business is with the moral, rather than the intellectual part of man's nature. The development of the understanding is, in her view, a means to an end—the moral and religious education of the child.

But the child, it may be said, though destined to a future state of being, has a part assigned him in the present; and if the sole concern of the Church is with his preparation for eternity, whence is he to derive the knowledge which will fit him to act that part; to fulfil the duties of the condition of life in which it has pleased God to place him? Why may not the State interpose to communicate this knowledge? It has a deep interest in the education of children; in taking care that they shall be furnished with such instruction as will render them useful members of the community, and enable them to contribute their share towards the promotion of the general welfare. Why, then, may it not take upon itself, or, rather, is it not bound to take upon itself, the office of communicating secular instruction, which falls immediately within its province, and does not properly fall within the province of the Church? Here is no

interference with the Church ; she may continue, as she does at present, to instil religious principles into the minds of the rising generation.

This is the real question now at issue with reference to the important subject of education ; whether religious shall be communicated separately from secular instruction ? Whether the latter shall be furnished to the people out of funds provided by the State, and they shall be left to seek the former for themselves ? of which the result will too often be, that they will not seek it at all. I am far from meaning to say that the patrons of the system of separate secular instruction contemplate the production of such a result. But such appears to me to be the necessary tendency of the separation. The impression made upon the public mind will be, that the State sets the greatest value on that to which it gives direct encouragement, for which it makes special provision ; that it considers secular instruction as of the essence of education, religious merely as accessory, as that which may or may not be super-added at pleasure ; and thus the importance of religious education will be lowered in the estimation of the people.

But let us look at the question under another point of view. Is the State, by introducing a system of separate secular instruction, taking the most effectual means of accomplishing even its own object ? That object is the formation

of virtuous and useful citizens ; which, under this system, is to be effected by teaching the child what is his real temporal interest, and how he may most effectually promote it ; and by training him up in habits of industry, activity, and good order. We deny not that these are material parts of a good education ; but are they alone sufficient to form a virtuous and useful citizen ? Mere knowledge, secular or religious, is only an instrument which may be employed for good or evil, according to the disposition of the possessor ; and if his disposition be evil, will only render him more dangerous to the community. The same may be said of habits of regularity, activity, and industry. Men may be active and industrious in the promotion of evil as well as good ; and there is nothing in the habits themselves which will ensure their direction to beneficial purposes. Experience, too, teaches us that, in order to induce men uniformly and steadily to pursue their own interest, it is not sufficient to point out to them the course by which they will most effectually promote it. Their conduct is perpetually at variance with the conclusions of their understanding ; nay, more, their inclinations and passions not unfrequently affect the very conclusions, casting a mist over their mental vision, and preventing them from discerning the truth. A system of education, in order to deserve the name, must be a training of the whole man : must apply to every part of the constitution of his

nature. Not only must the understanding be developed, but there must be a discipline of the heart and its affections; the appetites and passions must be brought under the control of a well-informed conscience. And how is the conscience to become well-informed? through the medium of religious instruction — instruction derived from those Scriptures which set before us the will of God and our own duty. To secure, therefore, the very object which the State has in view in imparting secular instruction, religious instruction must be interwoven with it. We mean not to say that even then the desired end will be always attained; that the important truths which we instil into the youthful mind will always exert a due influence over the practice: but we say that as far as the formation of the character of the child is dependant on human exertion, it is by this process alone that we can hope to secure the application of the secular instruction which we give him to his own benefit and that of society.

Whatever be the final determination of the legislature on this important question, our course, my Reverend Brethren, is clear. I have already briefly noticed the part which the Church expects her ministers to bear in the education of the rising generation¹. She means them to regard themselves as the

¹ See the Conferences of Massillon, tom. iii. De l'Instruction des Enfans.

spiritual parents of every child whom they baptize ; as having contracted towards him parental obligations ; as having pledged themselves to train him up in the fulfilment of his baptismal vows. He has, through their agency, been born again with water and the Spirit : if then they take no care by godly instruction to promote his spiritual growth, how do they differ from the unnatural parent who deserts the infant to which she has given birth ? Consider, my Reverend Brethren, the importance of taking advantage of the age of purity and docility, when the soul is yet ready to receive impressions favourable to holiness and goodness : when you have no prejudices to overcome, no habits of evil to subdue. If you allow this precious season to pass unimproved, you will in vain endeavour to recal it. Wait but a short time, and you will find that access to the mind is in a great measure barred against you ; that the lessons of piety which you inculcate produce no impression ; that you have almost cut yourself off from the possibility of reaping any fruit from your ministerial labours ; for to little purpose do you preach to the man, if you have allowed the child to grow up in ignorance. Consider too, that children, as they are the most interesting, are also the most important portion of your flock ; that they will become parents in turn, and that on them must, in the ordinary course of God's Providence, depend the moral character of their offspring. If you labour

to instil good principles into them, and the Divine blessing attends your labours, you will ensure a succession of generations, all walking in the ways and the commandments of God. If you neglect your trust, if you take no pains to instruct the children, whom the Church commits to your care, in their Christian duties, they will assuredly grow up in the practice of evil themselves, and will, through their offspring, perpetuate vice and misery.

If I appear to express myself strongly on this subject, it is because I think that its importance cannot be overrated; because I entirely concur in the opinion, “that the very existence of the Established Church rests upon the success of the effort which she is now making, under Divine grace, to instruct the rising generation in her religious principles.” Of the present generation many have been estranged from us; some, it is to be feared, by our own remissness; more by our inability to supply the spiritual wants of the rapidly increasing population; to provide ministers who might instruct the growing numbers, and Churches in which they might be instructed. To bring back those who have once united themselves to other religious communities, is at all times a difficult task: let us then direct our attention to the young. The interest which we show in the welfare of the child, if it does not recal the parent, will at least disarm hostility, and mitigate the bitterness of opposition. In

the first Charge which I delivered upon my appointment to the superintendance of this diocese, I alluded to the general disuse into which the practice of catechizing had fallen, and traced it partly to the establishment of national schools, which, by supplying the same religious instruction, appeared to render this portion of the ministerial labours less necessary. I cannot, however, but think that the practice might be resumed with advantage, especially if it were accompanied by a lecture, explanatory of the different parts of the Church Catechism. Such a lecture might be made the vehicle of communicating information to the older, as well as the younger part, of the congregation; and you could not perhaps adopt a better mode of carrying into effect that provision in the Plurality Act, respecting a second sermon, to which I have already called your attention.

What I have hitherto said relates to the duty which each minister owes to the younger portion of his own flock. Assailed, however, as the Church now is by a combination of adversaries, nothing but a corresponding combination, on the part of her own members, will enable her successfully to resist the assault. It is not now sufficient for a Churchman, lay or clerical, to say, "I take care that the children of my own parish are trained in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; that they are guarded, as far as human prudence can guard them, from the infection of vice and irreligion; this is my pro-

vince, and I mean not to step beyond it." These are not times in which he can safely intrench himself in this isolated position; he must bear in mind that there are other parishes less favourably circumstanced than his own: parishes which say, as the Macedonian in the vision said to St. Paul, "Come over to us, and help us;" weak points, which the enemy will neither be slow to discover, nor to attack; and he must be prepared to contribute his aid towards their defence. It is with the view of securing this co-operation among the members of the Church, that Diocesan Boards of Education have recently been established in many parts of the kingdom. They are framed in exact accordance with the constitution of the Church. The principle on which they are established is that laid down in the Canons,—that to the episcopal office belongs the superintendance of the instruction communicated to the rising generation throughout the diocese. The connexion of the Cathedral institutions with the education of the people, which their founders contemplated, is recognized and strengthened. The districts assigned to the different local boards are identified, as nearly as possible, with the existing ecclesiastical divisions; and their proceedings are conducted under the control of the ancient ecclesiastical authorities, the Archdeacons and Rural Deans. The advantages to be anticipated from the system, when brought into full operation, are the following: the procuring of accurate information

respecting the state of education in each diocese, and the consequent establishment of schools in districts in which they are now wanted; the improvement of the mode of education in the schools already existing, by the employment of better qualified masters, who will receive the requisite instruction in the Diocesan Training Schools, and by the introduction of a system of regular inspection; the establishment of good schools for the children of the middle classes, in which they will receive a sound religious education, according to the principles of the Established Church; and, above all, the additional efficacy which will be given to our efforts for the education of the people in general, by uniformity of plan and operation. Convinced, as I am, that this system must have the effect of bringing the benefits conferred by the Church more closely home to the bosoms of the middle and poorer classes of society, and of thus fixing it more firmly in their affections, I am assured, my Reverend Brethren, that you will give the local boards, with which your several parishes are connected, your cordial and active support.

There is still another subject, to which I must draw your attention before I bring this address to a close. Fifteen years ago, I ventured to express the opinion that the time was not far distant, when the whole controversy between the Roman and Anglican churches would be revived, and every point which had formerly been made a matter of

dispute, would again be discussed. The event has proved that I was not mistaken in my anticipation; and I am in consequence induced to offer some brief remarks upon one of the most important of the controverted points,—the Rule of Faith, in which is involved the question of the authority of Tradition. You are perhaps aware that the expression, “*Regula Fidei*,” or its equivalent, ὁ κανὼν τῆς πίστεως, ὁ κανὼν τῆς ἀληθείας, frequently occurs in the writings of the early fathers. It is, therefore, important to ascertain what meaning they attached to it. Irenæus, who wrote in the second century in confutation of the Gnostic heresies then prevalent, informs us that, when the heretics were confuted out of scripture, they appealed to oral Tradition¹. He proceeds, therefore, to inquire where the true apostolic doctrine is to be sought. He²

¹ Quum enim ex Scripturis arguuntur, in accusationem convertuntur ipsarum Scripturarum, quasi non recte habeant, neque sint ex autoritate, et quia varie sint dictæ, et quia non possit ex his inveniri veritas ab his, qui nesciant Traditionem. Non enim per literas traditam illam, sed per vivam vocem. L. 3. c. 2.

² Traditionem itaque Apostolorum in toto mundo manifestatam, in omni ecclesiâ adest perspicere omnibus qui vera velint videre: et habemus annumerare eos qui ab Apostolis instituti sunt Episcopi in Ecclesiâ, et successores eorum usque ad nos, qui nihil tale docuerunt neque cognoverunt quale ab his deliratur. Etenim si recondita mysteria scissent Apostoli, quæ seorsim et latenter ab reliquis perfectos docebant, his vel maxime traderent ea quibus etiam ipsas ecclesias committebant. Valde enim perfectos et irreprehensibiles in omnibus eos volebant esse, quos et successores relinquebant, suum ipsorum locum

answers, in those Churches which were founded by the apostles ; “for it is not,” he says, “to be supposed that they would keep back from those whom they appointed to be their successors in presiding over and feeding the flock of Christ, any portion of the knowledge necessary to qualify them to become the instructors of others. This knowledge they left as a precious deposit in the Churches which they founded, so that, if they had committed nothing to writing, still the true doctrine would have been preserved traditionally in those Churches, as it actually is among the barbarous nations which have been converted to Christianity, and do not possess the scriptures.” Here then Irenæus recognised the existence of an unwritten Tradition, from

magisterii tradentes. c. 3. Tantæ igitur ostensiones quum sint, non oportet adhuc quærere apud alios veritatem, quam facile est ab Ecclesiâ sumere : quum Apostoli, quasi in depositoryum dives, plenissimè in eam contulerint omnia quæ sint veritatis : uti omnis quicumque velit sumat ex eâ potum vitæ.—Quid enim ? Et si quibus de aliquâ modicâ quæstione disceptatio esset, nonne oporteret in antiquissimas recurrere Ecclesias in quibus Apostoli conversati sunt, et ab iis de præsentè quæstione sumere quod certum et re liquidum est ? Quid autem si neque Apostoli quidem Scripturas nobis reliquissent, nonne oportebat ordinem sequi Traditionis, quam tradiderunt iis quibus committebant Ecclesias ? Cui ordinationi assentiunt multæ gentes barbarorum eorum qui in Christum credunt, sine chartâ vel atramento scriptam habentes per Spiritum in cordibus suis salutem, et veterem Traditionem diligenter custodientes, in unum Deum credentes, &c. He then goes on to state concisely the principal articles of the Apostles’ Creed. c. 4.

which Christians might collect all that it was necessary for them to know and to believe unto salvation. But what was this Tradition ?¹ It was the creed, the *regula fidei*, that summary of religious truth, in which every catechumen was required to profess his belief before he was admitted to baptism ; and of which all the articles, as they are enumerated by Irenæus, are expressly contained in Scripture. In distinguishing, therefore, the Tradition of the apostolic Churches from Scripture, far from meaning to convey the notion that there was any difference between them, he meant to affirm that they were in perfect agreement. “²We have arrived,” he says, “at the knowledge of the dispensation of our salvation through no other channel than that, through which the Gospel has come down to us. The Apostles first preached the Gospel, and then, by the will of God, delivered it to us in the Scriptures, that it might be in all future ages the ground and pillar of our faith.” What the Apostles taught orally and what they committed to writing, the unwritten and written Tradition, was one and the same ; and when once

¹ οὕτω δὲ καὶ ὁ τὸν κανόνα τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκλινηῖ ἐν ἑαυτῷ κατέχων ὄν διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος εἴληφε. κ. τ. ε. Lib. i. c. 1. sub fin. He then, in c. 2, gives this Rule of Faith, agreeing in substance with the Apostles' Creed.

² Non enim per alios dispositionem salutis nostræ cognovimus, quam per eos per quos evangelium pervenit ad nos : quod quidem tunc præconiaverunt, postea vero per Dei voluntatem in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt, fundamentum et columnam fidei nostræ futurum. Lib. iii. c.

the Gospel had been committed to writing, the appeal to oral Tradition was superseded.

According then to Irenæus and all the early Fathers, the Rule of Faith was no other than the creed, the summary of truths, of which the belief was a necessary condition of communion with the Catholic Church. Thus then the controversy between the Anglican and Roman Churches with respect to doctrine, is reduced to a question of fact. Are the articles in which the two Churches differ, and in support of which the Church of Rome appeals to the authority of Tradition, (Transubstantiation for instance,) are those articles to be found in the Creed, or the Rule of Faith, of the Primitive Church? The answer must be in the negative.

The Romanist, however, while he must admit the fact, will reject the conclusion which we deduce from it, and contend that we have overlooked an element essential to the right determination of the question; the authority conferred by Christ on his Church. The Primitive Creed, he will say, has undergone alterations; articles have been added to it, as the descent of Christ into hell. The Nicene Creed contains many expressions not found in the earlier Creeds; the Constantinopolitan creed added articles to the Nicene. By what authority were these alterations and additions made? He answers, by the authority of the Church; and asks, why might not the Church of the thirteenth do what the Church of the fourth century did? Why might it not declare what had

always been the true belief respecting the manner of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, as in the Nicene Creed it declared what had always been the true belief respecting the unity of substance of the Father and the Son? Christ's promise is that He will be with the Church till the end of the world; He has not cancelled that promise; and consequently the authority which the Church received at first cannot be affected by the lapse of time. Thus, ¹as was justly remarked by one of the theologians at the council of Trent, the question respecting the Rule of Faith and the authority of Tradition, resolves itself into the question of the authority of the Church. The Romanist affirms, not that the Church can decree any thing contrary to Scripture, or add any new article of faith; but that it can *infallibly* declare what is the true interpretation of Scripture, and what has always been the true belief with respect to particular doctrines.

I have, I believe, stated the reasoning of the Romanist fully and fairly. I mean at least to do so. You will not fail to perceive that one point is assumed in it—the appointment by Christ of an infallible judge of controversy in the Church. I say assumed; because, if the Romanist is asked to prove this point, he must either decline to answer, on the plea that it is one which the Church cannot allow

¹ History of the Council of Trent in Courayer's Translation, book ii. c. 45.

to be discussed ; or, reasoning in a vicious circle, he must appeal to Scripture, as interpreted by the uniform Tradition of the Church. Having said that we are to receive the Church's interpretation of Scripture on the ground of its infallible authority, he must now allege that very interpretation of Scripture in proof of its infallibility.

Supposing, however, the appeal to be made, where are we to look for the uniform Tradition of the Church ? In the writings of the Fathers ? Who are the Fathers ? A series of writers extending through ten centuries, of whom the more recent cannot be regarded as independant witnesses to the faith of the primitive Church, but merely as repeating what had been declared to be such by those who preceded them. To the authority then of the early Fathers alone, can weight in this question be attached ; and when they, living as they did near to the Apostolic times, tell us what was the Rule of Faith then taught, and what were the sacred books then read in the Church, we receive their testimony as that of witnesses in whose means of information, and in whose integrity we have perfect confidence. But when they put forth their own arguments in defence of the Rule of Faith, or their own interpretations of Scripture, we no longer regard them as witnesses ¹,

¹ Non de testimonio eorum, sed vero de judicio est quæstio, in quâ nullum habent a suâ vetustate præsidium. Dodwelli Diss. Cyprianicæ, iv. § 13.

but as reasoners: and we pay no greater deference to their authority than to that of other good and pious, but fallible men. In the exercise of the right of private judgment, we are bound to consult every source of information, from which we are likely to obtain the means of arriving at a just conclusion; and an interpreter of the Bible would be guilty of great presumption, if he were to disregard, or to reject without examination, the opinions of the Fathers; but he is not bound implicitly to subscribe to them, even when he finds a very general agreement in any one interpretation. The only authoritative Tradition is that of which Irenæus speaks, the doctrine delivered by the Apostles to the Churches which they founded, and afterwards consigned by them to writing in the volume of the New Testament, in order that it might be in all future ages the ground and pillar of the truth. The Church of England, therefore, almost speaks the language of Irenæus, when she declares that holy Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation; and proposes it as the test by which the truth of every doctrine is to be tried; requiring her members to give their assent to the three creeds, not because they were sanctioned by the decrees of councils, not in obedience to any infallible authority residing in herself, but because they can be proved by most certain warrants of holy writ. She calls not the Scriptures the Rule of Faith. The framers of her articles knew that in the primitive Church, this

title was applied to the creed. But she says that no article is to be received as a part of that Rule which is not read in, or cannot be proved by Scripture.

There are still several questions, connected with the doctrines, the discipline, and the temporal interests of the Church; on which, if the time would permit, I should be disposed to offer some observations. But I fear that I have already wearied your patience. I will, therefore, add only one remark. I have spoken of the present state of the established Church, as a state of difficulty and trial—a representation of which even our adversaries will not dispute the correctness. The fact is to them a source of rejoicing. Let it operate on us, my Reverend Brethren, as a motive to self-examination, and anxious enquiry, whether this state of things may not be traced in some degree to our own neglect: as a motive to increased circumspection in our life and conversation, increased activity and zeal in the discharge of all our ministerial duties: above all, as a motive to increased earnestness in our prayers to Almighty God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified, that He will be pleased to enable each of us, in our vocation and ministry, to serve Him more effectually to the promotion of His glory, and the edification of the people committed to our charge.

THE END.

LONDON :
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.



